

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 155

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORG GR PINR

SUBJECT: PRE-1967 HEAD OF GREEK NAVY REAPPOINTED

1. SUMMARY: VICE ADMIRAL CONSTANTINE ENGOLFOPOULOS, WHO SERVED AS CHIEF OF NAVY UNTIL APRIL 1967 COUP, WAS REAPPOINTED TO SAME POSITION JAN 7 FOLLOWING RESIGNATION OF VICE ADMIRAL P. ARAPAKIS. ENGOLFOPOULOS IS HIGHLY REGARDED AND EXPERIENCED NAVAL OFFICER WHO SERVED IN CARAMANLIS CARETAKER GOVERNMENT AS MINISTER OF MERCHANT MARINE AND WAS IMPRISONED BY MILITARY REGIME FOLLOWING ABORTIVE NAVY MUTINY IN MAY 1973. APPOINTMENT OF ENGOLFOPOULOS WHO WAS ACTIVE RESISTANCE FIGURE TO REPLACE ARAPAKIS REPRESENTS ANOTHER PLANK IN GOG'S DEJUNTIZATION PLATFORM AND COULD PRESAGE FURTHER CHANGES IN NAVY HIERARCHY. END SUMMARY.

2. GOG ANNOUNCED JAN 7 APPOINTMENT OF VICE ADMIRAL CONSTANTINE ENGOLFOPOULOS AS CHIEF OF NAVY, POSITION HE HELD IN PARIL, 1967 WHEN MILITARY COPU LEADERS OUSTED HIM. HE SUCCEEDS VICE ADMIRAL P. ARAPAKIS WHO RESIGNED FOR "PERSONAL REASONS" HAVING COMPLETED 18 MONTHS IN THIS POSITION. ARAPAKIS REPORTEDLY TOLD GREEK NAVAL OFFICERS ON JAN 4 THAT HE WAS RESIGNING TO PERMIT GOG TO RENEW CADRES OF NAVY. MINISTER OF DEFENSE AVEROFF PRAISED ARAPAKIS WHO WAS LAST RANKING MILITARY APPOINTMENT HOLDOVER FROM JUNTA PERIOD AS "INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS BEEN OF

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TREMENDOUS HELP TO ME RIGHT FROM EVENING OF JULY 23, 1974."

COMMANDER OF FLEET VICE ADMIRAL P. KALOGEROPOULOS ALSO RESIGNED AND WAS REPLACED BY CAPTAIN SPIROS KONOFAS, WHO WAS RETIRED BY DICTATORSHIP IN 1967 BUT ADVANCED TO RANK OF VICE ADMIRAL UPON ASSUMING NEW POSITION.

3. ARAPAKIS IN CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY REMARKED THAT GREEK NAVY KNEW NOTHING ABOUT PLOT TO TOPPLE PRESIDENT MAKARIOS JULY 15, THAT HE PERSONALLY OBJECTED TO POSSIBILITY OF ENTERING DIRECT HOSTILITIES WITH TURKEY, THAT GREEK FLEET UNDER HIS INSTRUCTION NEVER DEPARTED GREEK TERRITORIAL WATERS DURING JULY CYPRUS CRISIS AND THAT NO GREEK SUBMARINES WERE IN CYPRUS AREA DURING CRISIS AND THUS COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN ACTION AGAINST TURKISH SHIPS. (NOTE: ARAPAKIS' STATEMENT WHICH WAS REPORTED WIDELY IN PRESS IS USEFUL IN TAMPING DOWN CRITICISM OF GREEK NAVY FOR NOT ENGAGING IN COMBAT ACTION AGAINST TURKISH FLEET AND IN SCOTCHING POPULAR RUMORS THAT U.S. SIXTH FLEET HALTED GREEK SHIPS IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS FROM PROCEEDING TO CYPRUS.)

4. VICE ADMIRAL ENGOLFOPOULOS IS 63 YEARS OLD, BORN NEAR LAMIA, ENTERED NAVY CADET SCHOOL IN 1929 AND GRADUATED WITH RANK OF ENSIGN IN 1933. HE FOUGHT DURING WORLD WAR II IN VARIOUS COMMANDS ON GREEK DESTROYERS AND SUBMARINES. HE ESCAPED TO ALEXANDRIA IN COMMAND OF SUBMARINE "NEREUS." 1952-54 HE SERVED AT NATO HEADQUARTERS IN PARIS, 1955-57 HE WAS ASSIGNED AS CAPTAIN IN CHARGE OF OPERATIONS OF NAVAL GENERAL STAFF AND AS COMMANDER OF CRUISER "ELLI." 1958 ENGOLFOPOULOS ATTENDED SCHOOL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, 1959 COMMANDER OF WAR COLLEGE, 1959 U.S. TRAINING AT ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE COURSE, SAN DIEGO, 1960 COMMANDER OF SMALL VESSELS, 1961 SENIOR COMMANDER OF NAVY YARD IN CRETE, 1962-63 CHIEF OF INTELLIGENCE AT NATO STAFF IN MALTA, 1964-65 HE SERVED IN GENERAL STAFF OF NATIONAL DEFENSE MINISTRY AS REAR ADMIRAL, 1965 CHIEF OF CRETAN-IOANIAN SEA COMMAND, 1966 DEPUTY CHIEF OF NAVY GENERAL STAFF, AND 1967 CHIEF OF NAVY. ENGOLFOPOULOS RETIRED UPON HIS OWN REQUEST IN APRIL, 1967 AFTER MILITARY TAKEOVER AND WAS ARRESTED FOR ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT WITH NAVY MUTINY IN MAY 1973 AND RETAINED IN ISOLATION BY

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GREEK MILITARY POLICE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. ENGOLFOPOULOS HAS BEEN DECORATED WITH NUMEROUS MEDALS INCLUDING FRENCH LEGION OF HONOR, CROSS OF MERIT OF WEST GERMANY. HE SPEAKS ENGLISH AND FRENCH.

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